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TOO MANY HUSBANDS

FARCICAL COMEDY

BY

ANTHONY E. WILLS

DICK & FITZGERALD
PUBLISHERS
18 Ann Street, New York

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CONTROL OF THE CONT

TOO MANY HUSBANDS

A Farce in Two Acts

(ADAPTED FROM THE FRENCH)

BY

ANTHONY E. WILLS

AUTHOR OF "JUST PLAIN FOLKS," "EAST SIDERS," "STUBBORN MOTOR CAR," "COLLEGE CHUMS," "A COUNT OF NO ACCOUNT," "NEW "ENGLAND FOLKS," "OAK FARM," "BENJAMIN, BENNY AND BEN" AND "MATINEE IDOL"

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NEW YORK
DICK & FITZGERALD
18 ANN STREET

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TOO MANY HUSBANDS.

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CHARACTERS.

COLONEL THADDEUS CRANE, of His Majesty's Service, Eccentric
character
DOROTHY CRANE, his daughterIngenue
CHAUNCEY CHILTON, his Secretary
ARTHUR MAITLAND, a poor Author, his nephewLead
HARRY Brown, a BookkeeperJuvenile
MILLY Brown, Harry's wife
Reverend Ormsby, a Preacher
Mrs. Sheffield, Harry's mother-in-law
Mollie, a Servant
Jones, an Expressman
O'FLYNN, a Patrolman
RUDOLPH BAUER,

Note.—Jones can double O'FLYNN.

TIME.—The present. Locality.—The Bronx.

TIME OF PLAYING.—Two hours.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I.—Home of the Browns, on the outskirts of the Bronx, New York City. Nine o'clock in the morning.

Act II,—Same as before. One hour later,

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

Colonel Thaddeus Crane aged 55, is a short, heavy-set, red-faced, bald-headed man, with gray side whiskers; wearing a checkered suit, red vest, fancy tie, white spats and soft hat. Act I. Later in act changes coat to a frock. Act II. same as Act I.

CHAUNCEY CHILTON, his secretary, is a thin, dark complexioned, smooth-shaven, nervous man about thirty, wearing a black coat, trousers, tie, and having an almost clerical

look. Same Act II.

ARTHUR MAITLAND, is a good-looking juvenile about 25 wearing a sack or walking suit Act I, however, for first entrance, wears lounging robe over same and has towel tied about his head. No material change for Act II.

HARRY BROWN, a smooth-shaven juvenile, a bookkeeper, about Arthur's age. Plainly dressed Act I. Act II, wears an apron tied about his waist and jacket off; sleeves rolled

up.

RUDOLPH BAUER, a German, wearing blonde wig and whiskers; broad suit and silk hat, much too large for his head. Also a police badge pinned to vest which he displays end of Act II.

REVEREND ORMSBY, a preacher, wearing frock-coat, large

white bow tie, silk hat and white cotton gloves.

Jones, the expressman, wears a blue shirt, black trousers and expressman's cap. Pencil behind ear and large book under arm.

O'FLYNN, is a typical New York patrolman. Red hair and

ruddy face.

DOROTHY CRANE, is a good-looking ingenue about twentyone. ACT 1, wears a traveling coat over a pretty dress. ACT. II, another pretty gown.

MILLY Brown, aged about twenty-five, wears a neat house

dress and small apron Act I. Act II, discards apron.

Mrs. Sheffield, Harry's mother-in-law, is a good-sized, sharp-mannered woman. Wears her hair combed straight back; a small black bonnet, with ribbons, tied under her chin; eye-glasses, short cape, and carries a small hand-bag and umbrella. After first exit, discards bonnet and cape.

Mollie, the servant, is a pretty girl. Neatly dressed and

also wearing an apron,

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES.

Newspaper, Towel, Plate for Harry. Sugar-bowl, Letters, Telegram for Mollie. Valise with Shirts, Collars, etc. Letter, Handcuffs for Bauer. Umbrella, Letters for Mrs. Sheffield. Revolver, Sword, Valises for Colonel Crane.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage, facing audience, R. means right hand; L. left hand; C. center of stage; C. D. center door in rear flat; R. 1 and R. 3 right first and third entrances; L. 1 an L. 3, left first and third entrances.

TOO MANY HUSBANDS

ACT I.

SCENE.-A plain, yet neatly furnished room with doors R. 1, and R. 3, C. and L. 1, and L. 3. Table with three chairs R. C. Table is laid for three; couch L. C.; fancy pillows on couch. Screen upper L. corner; sideboard upper R., with dishes, silver-ware etc. Sign over door "No Place Like Home." Pictures on wall; carpet down. Time, 9 A. M. HENRY BROWN and MILLY Brown, DISCOVERED seated at table, eating breakfast. HARRY at the same time is also perusing morning paper. (MILLY taps bell.)

ENTER MOLLIE D. C.

Mollie. Did you ring, ma'am? Milly. Yes, Mollie. You neglected the sugar.

Mollie. Oh, yes, ma'am. [EXIT L. 3. MILLY (to HARRY). It seems strange for you to be at home to-day, doesn't it, Harry?

HARRY. Well, a fellow doesn't have a christening on every

day.

MILLY (pouring coffee). Mother wrote she'd come rain or shine; and you know it's her first visit since we were married.

HARRY. And I hope it's her last.

MILLY (indignant). Harry!

HARRY. Can you blame me, when you remember how she used to go for me before we were married?

MILLY (passing him cup). That's unkind, for you know

mother always liked you.

HARRY. Had a queer way of showing it. (Turning page

of paper) Used to nearly eat my head off.

Milly (reprovingly). I don't know what's got into you lately. You're awfully irritable.

HARRY. Well, you're not the calmest person on the globe either.

MILLY. At least I'm not always quarreling. Please don't let Mollie hear you make such dreadful remarks.

HARRY. Who cares for Mollie?

MILLY (sharply). I do.

HARRY (imitating her). I don't.

ENTER Molly D. L. 3, with sugar-bowl, which she places on table.

MILLY (changing tone). Thank you, dear. What can be keeping Mr. Maitland this morning?

Mollie. Came home pretty late last night, ma'am.

MILLY. Did you call him, dear?

MOLLIE. Yes ma'am, I knocked at least a dozen times. HARRY (suddenly looking intently at paper). Hello!

MILLY (interested). What is it now?

HARRY. Remember that fellow Sweeney, the detectives were all after a few years ago?

MILLY. I do believe I remember something of the sort.

HARRY. Well, the authorities have an idea they've spotted their man. Scotland Yard detectives believe he left Europe on an ocean liner a week ago and have cabled the New York police to be on a sharp lookout for him.

MILLY. Now I remember! Wasn't he the swindler

who---?

HARRY (quickly). The identical. I thought they'd never get him. I'd like nothing better than to land that twenty thousand dollars reward.

MILLY. Twenty thousand dollars? Gracious!

HARRY (cutting photo. reproduction from paper). I'm going to keep this picture and from now on compare it with every face I meet.

MILLY. You'll have a nice job on your hands. You'd do better if you found out what can be keeping Mr. Maitland.

May be he is ill.

HARRY. Oh, I know what his trouble is. (Rising) But perhaps I'd better hurry him down anyway. [EXIT D. R. 3.

Mollie. Didn't you hear him come home last night, ma'am? It was near three o'clock.

MILLY. As late as that, Mollie?

Mollie. Oh dear, yes, and he took most an hour getting up the hall stairway. I thought every minute, he'd tumble to the bottom. (Bell rings off) The postman, ma'am.

[EXIT D. C. going R.

MILLY. And poor Mr. Maitland needs money so badly. I suppose he's become despondent and doesn't care now, what happens.

ENTER MOLLIE D. C. with letter.

Mollie. For you, ma'am. Brought by a messenger boy. Milly (taking it). By a messenger boy? For me? (Quickly breaks seal and reads.)

ENTER HARRY D. R. 3.

HARRY. I've got Arthur up at last. He'll be right down. (Then espying letter) Hello, a letter?

MILLY. Yes, Harry, and we're in luck.

HARRY. I don't understand.

MILLY. Don't you remember me telling you about the telephone call bright and early this morning?

HARRY. Yes-some German wanted to rent a room. You

don't mean to say anything's come of it?

MILLY. Here's a note enclosing a money order for two weeks in advance.

HARRY (taking note and glancing at it). You don't tell me. (Looking up) This fellow must have money to burn.

MILLY. It will help reduce our expenses, won't it, dear?
HARRY. Well you can just bet it will. Who is he anyway? (Looking at note. Reads) "Rudolph Bauer." He's a German all right.

MILLY. I'm so pleased. (To Mollie) Better tidy the big front room, Mollie, so everything will be in readiness

when the gentleman arrives.

Mollie. Yes, ma'am. [EXIT D. R. 1.

HARRY. Too bad he's coming on the very day fixed for the christening. Couldn't you have asked him to wait for a few days?

MILLY. I tried to, but he said he had to find a place

to-day.

HARRY. I suppose your mother will go on the war-path when she learns we take in boarders.

MILLY (indignant). I'll have you understand my mother doesn't go on war-paths!

HARRY. I'd like to know what you call them then!

MILLY. My mother never-

ENTER ARTHUR D. R. 3, a towel tied about his head.

MILLY (espying him and changing tone). Why, Mr. Maitland is that you?

ARTHUR (sadly). All that's left of me.

MILLY. You look ill.

ARTHUR (groans). I don't look half as bad as I feel. (Sinks into chair R. of table. Groans) Oh, my poor head. HARRY (patting him on shoulder). I don't want to rub it

HARRY (patting him on shoulder). I don't want to rub it in, old pal, but you're only paying the piper for the tune he played.

ARTHUR (hand to head). Then he's overcharged me.

(Groans) I never in all my life had such a-

MILLY (offering him platter). Won't you have some nice Virginia ham?

ARTHUR (business). I'll have the doctor if this terrible

pounding in my head doesn't cease.

Milly. You've been overdoing the past few weeks, Mr. Maitland.

ARTHUR. I know I have, but I felt so relieved at the completion of my book that I just had to cut loose and let go.

HARRY. Well you let go all right. Heard anything since

submitting your new novel?

ARTHUR. Not a word—and that's also got me going. (Becoming serious) Unless I soon receive a check, I'll have to get a job and go to work—real work!

HARRY (shaking head). Terrible, terrible.

MILLY. What about your rich uncle abroad who used to send you money so regularly?

ARTHUR. Last heard from him a month ago. Was then

very ill and I'm afraid, seriously.

HARRY. If anything happened! Supposing he should—ARTHUR (quickly). His will you mean? I don't think I've much chance there. He has a daughter, you know. Uncle's a most peculiar old codger, my mother's brother and when, after my folks died, I was placed in his care, he endeavored to make me walk a chalk line. I remonstrated. I had literary aspirations; he thought me crazy and wanted me to become a butcher—

MILLY. A butcher? Horrid!

ARTHUR. It was tug and tug from morning until night. Then he objected to my becoming engaged to his daughter; said I wasn't a fit candidate for her hand. Finally, I sickened of the whole thing, broke away and came back to

America. He's had no great love for me since; but I will say, has treated me a great deal better than I perhaps deserved.

HARRY. Then you really think the butcher business——ARTHUR. Was where I belonged. As a literary man I appear to be a rank failure.

Milly. Nonsense, don't lose your nerve. From what you state of your new book, it ought to prove a great success.

HARRY (patting him on back). Then remember, the publishers are flooded with manuscripts. It requires time to weed them out. It may be six or eight months before you know the verdict.

ARTHUR (despairingly). And in the meantime?

HARRY (patting him on shoulder). Well Arthur, old chap, you'll continue to live with us. We haven't forgotten how you helped us out last winter when I was out of a job. You were always willing to share your last dollar with us—

MILLY (warmly). And we haven't forgotten it. (Then changing subject) But what of the girl—your uncle's

daughter?

ARTHUR. Heard a while ago she'd marry some English chap.

MILLY. Wasn't very loyal to you, was she?

ARTHUR. Oh, it wasn't Dorothy's doings; I'll wager on it. But it's a long story—and will make good matter for a romance, later on. (Bell rings below)

MILLY (calling aloud). The doorbell! Mollie! Mollie!

ENTER MOLLIE, D. R. 1.

Mollie. Yes, ma'am.

MILLY. See who's below, dear.

[EXIT MOLLIE D. C. going R.

HARRY. Who can it be I wonder?

MILLY. It couldn't be mama. It would take her longer to come up on the subway.

ARTHUR (surprised). Your mother coming? HARRY. For the christening you know.

ARTHUR. By jove—the christening. And I've been counting on the sale of that book to buy the kid a decent present.

HARRY (patting him on shoulder). Brace up, old pal—and forget it. We owe you a great deal more already than

we can ever hope to repay.

ARTHUR. Oh, don't think for a moment I entirely forgot

the little tot. No sirce, I dropped into Clarkson's yesterday and ordered-well, what do you think?

HARRY. Can't imagine. MILLY.

ARTHUR. A baby-carriage. It ought to arrive this morning.

ENTER MOLLIE D. C.

Mollie. Please, ma'am, a gentleman below who says he's the new boarder.

MILLY (up). The new boarder? Show him up, Mollie. [EXIT MOLLIE D. C., going R.

ARTHUR (rising). A new boarder? Why I HARRY (forcing him back on chair). Finish your breakfast, old man.

ENTER MOLLIE D. C. followed by RUDOLPH BAUER, carrying a large valise.

Mollie. Right this way sir, right this way. [EXIT D. C. BAUER (with sweeping bow). Madam, mit bleasure. You are der lady of der house?

MILLY. I am the landlady.

BAUER (bowing). Dee-lighted. Und I am Rudolph Bauer,

der gentlemans vat rented der room.

MILLY. You will find everything in readiness. (Presenting HARRY) This is Mr. Brown and this (Introducing ARTHUR) Mr. Maitland, our other boarder.

BAUER. Ach, yes. Gentlemans—also dee-lighted. (Bows. To MILLY) Den you got only one oder boarder besides myself?

MILLY. That is all at present.

BAUER. Und I thought dere vas oders. You expect somebody else to-day, vat?

MILLY. No. Oh, yes-my mother.

BAUER. Oh, you expect your mother. (With smile) How nice.

HARRY. What is your business, Mr. Bauer?

Ach it is-und it isn't a bizness. I am an erfinder. Such-vat you call him-an inventor.

HARRY. Inventor eh? Of what, pray?

BAUER. Of wonderful dings. You see before I am here a great while. I astound der whole continent-und more besides. I will revolunize der entire world. I will-

ENTER MOLLIE D. C.

MILLY (interrupting). Mollie, please show Mr. Bauer to his room.

Mollie (crossing to D. R. 1.). This way, sir.

BAUER (crossing to D. R. 1). Mit bleasure. (At door) You are sure you expect no one else-no men folks?

MILLY. Positive.

BAUER. Vell. dot seems to decide it. (With a low bow) [EXIT with Mollie D. R. 1. Gentlemens!

ARTHUR. Queer fellow that.

MILLY. Yes, but he's got lots of money. Just think naid me in advance.

ARTHUR (looking down). That's one on me. I haven't

paid you in four weeks.

HARRY (patting him on shoulder). There you go again. Milly didn't mean it that way.

MILLY. Of course I didn't.

HARRY. But Arthur is right. He is a peculiar individual. And so anxious about other men. (Starts and quickly takes torn sheet of newspaper from pocket) Can it be possible he is the notorious Sweeney?

ARTHUR. Not with a face like that.

HARRY (holding up paper). Does he look anything like this?

MILLY (pouting). Since you're so suspicious—I'm really

sorry I ever-

HARRY (comforting her). There, there girlie; but just imagine that reward! It's enough to make one's hair stand on end.

ENTER MOLLIE timidly D. R. 1.

Mollie (reluctantly to Arthur, who is drinking coffee). Please Mr. Maitland—

ARTHUR. Well, Mollie-

MOLLIE. You won't be angry with me, I hope. ARTHUR. Angry with you? What about?

MOLLIE. I didn't mean to forget it, sir—but I put it in the pocket of my other apron and never gave it a thought

until---

ARTHUR (puzzled). Never gave what a thought?

MOLLIE (gingerly holding out letter). This letter. It

came over two weeks ago.

ARTHUR (quickly). A letter! Two weeks ago! From the publishers! (Dances around singing lively air) I'll bet my, book's been accepted. (Reprovingly to Mollie) Oh, Mollie -Mollie-why did you keep this joyful news from me?

Mollie (piqued). I couldn't help it, sir-I just forgot.

HARRY (interested). I do hope it's good luck. MILLY. If only your book has been accepted!

ARTHUR (hurriedly opens letter, reads and starts). Great Scott! (Sinks into chair.)

HARRY. What is it?

ARTHUR (moans despairingly). I'm lost! lost! lost! (Mol-LIE L. C., thumbs her apron and pouts, ready to cry.)

HARRY. Man, you're as pale as a sheet. What has hap-

pened?

ARTHUR (hands him letter). Read! Read! (HARRY glances quickly at letter.)

ARTHUR. It's the worst news I could have received. A letter from my uncle.

HARRY (to MILLY, who anxiously looks over his shoulder).

And he's coming to America.

ARTHUR. If not already here. And bringing his daughter (Warmly) Dorothy with him.

HARRY (handing MILLY letter. To ARTHUR). But I don't

see anything in that to-

ARTHUR. Oh, don't you, though? My boy, it's a long

story-a long, long story.

MILLY (having glanced at letter. To Mollie). Go below Mollie. It's all your fault. You're too forgetful for anything.

Mollie (crying). I didn't mean it, ma'am—I really didn't [EXIT D. C. going R. mean it.

HARRY. But even yet, Arthur, I don't see the point.

MILLY (to HARRY). Don't you see? The letter being delayed the old gentleman probably arrived this morning without anyone to welcome him at the pier.

ARTHUR (sadly). If that were all,—but it isn't. I'll have to make a clean breast of the thing before you'll thoroughly

understand my whole miserable business.

HARRY. Clean breast of it? Why you talk as if you'd committed some crime.

ARTHUR. I've acted shabbily, but the winter was a hard

HARRY (anxiously). For heaven's sake, Arthur, speak out! Don't keep us in this dreadful suspense. We are your friends and will stick by you through thick and thin. Now out with it-what have you done?

ARTHUR (brokenly). I've married.

HARRY.) Married? When? MILLY.

ARTHUR (sadly). It's over a year ago.

HARRY (warmly). Over a year ago! You sly dog! And never a word to us about it-your closest friends! (Offering hand) Congratulations!

ARTHUR (sadly). Rather pity me.

MILLY. Pity you? How strange you act.

ARTHUR. You see I'm married—and still—unmarried.

HARRY. The plot thickens!
MILLY. Divorced? (ARTHUR sadly shakes head negatively.)

HARRY (sympathetically). Your wife died. I know, you're

a widower.

ARTHUR. Wrong again.

HARRY. } We give it up.

ARTHUR. The fact is, my uncle only thinks I'm married.

HARRY. Ah ha, I begin to smell a mouse.

ARTHUR (sadly). He began cutting my allowance a year ago and becoming desperate, I hit upon the idea-

HARRY. Of writing him you were married. (Laughs

heartily) Clever scheme.

ARTHUR. The colonel was tickled and immediately doubled my allowance, displaying unprecedented haste in sending it to me.

HARRY. Clever boy. But you should have no cause for alarm. Your wife's gone to the seaside, mountains, any-

thing and you are rooming with us.

ARTHUR (shaking head). Which would be all right had I not written him I'd bought this house.

HARRY. Bought this house?

ARTHUR. Yes, last winter-remember when you needed that loan? Well I got uncle to cable me the amount.

HARRY (musing). That does complicate the thing.

MILLY (looking at letter). He only intends remaining for a few days prior to leaving for the baths at Hot Springs. HARRY. I have it. You shall own this house and we will

be your guests-your boarders.

ARTHUR (reluctantly). There's just one other little detail which also gives me concern.

HARRY. Go on-what else?

ARTHUR. Well, uncle insisted that I send him a photograph of my wifeHARRY (laughing heartily). I see, I see—and you sent him a photograph——

MILLY (joining laugh). Of some chorus girl-

HARRY (now loudly laughing). Some yellow-haired high kicker.

ARTHUR (seriously). No—I sent him a photograph of your wife!

HARRY (immediately stopping laughter). Of my wife!

Of Milly?

MILLY (indignant). Of me?

ARTHUR. Don't be angry. I was cornered and had to act quickly. Seeing your wife's photograph on the mantle, I was seized with a—well never mind the graphic details—I sent uncle——

MILLY (reprovingly). My picture! How could you—how

could you?

HARRY (comforting her). There, there Milly, don't be hard on Arthur. He's been our best friend in the past; our friend in need, so to speak.

ARTHUR. It was wrong of me I know, but I never thought

-I never realized what a plight-

HARRY (to ARTHUR). It's too late now to undo it. We've got to make the best of it. The question is, what can we do to help you.

ARTHUR. You've agreed to lend me your house; would it

be possible for you to also-

HARRY (starting). What! Lend you my wife? Great Scott, man!

MILLY (indignant). How dare you!

ARTHUR. At present, kind friends, I would dare most anything. (To Harry) Just to present her, you know, old chap, in case he insists upon seeing her.

HARRY (to MILLY). I can see no great harm in it, Milly.

(To ARTHUR) Why of course I will.

ARTHUR (up, offering hand). You've saved my life!
MILLY (handkerchief to eyes). This is awful! awful!
What will mother say?

ARTHUR (sinking back in chair). Yes-mother!

HARRY. I never thought of my mother-in-law. (Aside to Arthur) And she's a terror, Arthur.

MILLY (stamping foot). I won't be a party to it.

HARRY. Oh, yes you will.

MILLY (emphatically). Oh, no, I won't.

HARRY. You must! We can't desert Arthur now that he needs help. (Hands on her shoulders) There's a good

little wifey. (Then suddenly) And the new boarder! What of him?

MILLY. The inventor, you mean?

HARRY. He's got to get out of that room.

ARTHUR. Uncle must have the best room in the house.

It would never do to——
HARRY. I have it. We'll put the German in the garret.

(At D. C. Calling) Mollie! Mollie! Mollie!

Milly (pouting). But Harry, he has paid in advance.

HARRY. That's just why he goes upstairs.

ENTER MOLLIE D. C.

HARRY (to MOLLIE). Mollie, I want you to change the new boarder to the garret room.

MOLLIE. But sir, there's only a small cot up there and

the roof leaks terrible.

HARRY (emphatically). Do as I tell you. Mollie. Yes, sir. (Crosses to D. R. 1.)

HARRY. Tell him he was shown that room by mistake. It belongs to one of the other boarders. Tell him anything.

Mollie. Yes, sir. [EXIT D. R. 1. HARRY (consulting watch). We haven't a minute to lose.

If your uncle arrives, with my mother-in-law on the job, and they should by chance meet! (Waving hands above his head) Great Cæsar, can you imagine the scrap!
MILLY. I shall faint I know, when they meet!

HARRY. That might even help some too.

Bauer (heard off D. R. 1). Vot's dot? I hired dis room und here I stay. (Pause) No sir, no sir, I won't do it. (Pause) Where is der landlady—I speak mit her. (EN-TERS angrily D. R. 1) See here, vot is dis humbugs I hear shust now?

HARRY. I'll explain it to you.

BAUER (angrily). I make my arrangements mit dis lady. Who are you anyway?

HARRY. I sir, am this lady's-

ARTHUR (pulling HARRY'S coat). Man of all work.

MILLY (starting). What?

ARTHUR (in HARRY'S ear). He mustn't know you are HARRY (winking at ARTHUR). That's right. (To BAUER) Man of all work.

BAUER. Oh so iss it, eh? Well, I paid for dot room und

I want it.

HARRY. You paid for the room upstairs. This room was assigned to another boarder weeks ago.

BAUER. Another boarder?

HARRY. Yes-a gentleman from abroad.

BAUER (starts). Ah, ha! from abroad! At last! At last! (To MILLY) Und you madam, you said dere vas no oder boarders. I don't understand dis monkey-doodle-bizness. (Bell rings below.)

ENTER MOLLIE D. C. and EXIT D. R. 3.

HARRY. We've no time to argue. You'll have to hurry, sir.

BAUER. I want first, an explanation, for why dis lady

told me

HARRY (seizing him by arm). Come on-I'll do the ex-

plaining. (Starts to force him toward D. C.)

BAUER (his valise opens permitting shirts, collars and cuffs to fall to floor). Hold on, hold on, I am losing my baggage.

(Bell rings loudly below.)

HARRY (excitedly). Hurry, hurry! (ARTHUR and MILLIE on either side of Bauer assist him in recovering his laundry. Each time valise is filled, he permits cover to drop open, so that laundry is again thrown out. Great confusion prevails for a moment and finally Bauer, with valise, shirts, collars and cuffs jumbled in his arms, is dragged to d. C.)

HARRY. Come on, come on, I'll show you to your room!

BAUER (protesting). Und I show you someding, when I get my hands loose.

[EXIT D. C. going L.

MILLY (goes to D. C., looks after them). I do hope Harry

doesn't get hurt.

ARTHUR. It's my fault. I alone am to blame for the

present state of things.

MILLY (glancing L.). Gracious! It must be your uncle. ARTHUR (glancing at lounging robe). He mustn't see me like this. (Quickly to D. R. 3) I'll make myself presentable.

[EXIT D. R. 3.

MILLY (nervously looking off R.). And I, myself scarce. (Going to D. L. 3) What will mother say if she learns I've got two husbands? Gracious, as if one wasn't enough.

[EXIT D. L. 3.

ENTER HARRY breathlessly D. C.

HARRY. Thank goodness the German's out of the way. I locked him in. He's safe for awhile anyway. (Glancing L.) Hello, Mollie's let them in. Well, you can bet I'm not going

to be the reception committee. (Espies screen) I'll size them up from behind here. (Behind screen.)

ENTER MOLLIE D. C., followed by Colonel Thaddeus Crane, DOROTHY, his daughter, and CHAUNCEY CHILTON.

Mollie. Right this way-right this way.

Colonel (looking around). Not a pretentious house, Dorothy—but comfortable. By gad, the boy's change of pace surprises me. To Mollie) Is your master at home?

Mollie (nervously). I don't know, sir.

COLONEL. Don't know?

Mollie (nervously). I mean—I'll see, sir. (Starts L.) COLONEL. Just a moment. (Clearing throat) Your master, he is engaged regularly in business, I trust?

Mollie. Oh, yes, sir. Each day—at the factory.

COLONEL. BOROTHY. Factory?

Mollie (adding). As a bookkeeper—yes, sir.

COLONEL. Bookkeeper? Ah, then he's given up his foolish literary aspirations, eh? Splendid—splendid! (Nudging Chilton in the side) His wife probably did that. See what a wife can do for a man? (To MOLLIE) He expected us, of

MOLLIE (nervously). Well, I couldn't say, sir. He expected his mother-in-law-I know. (HARRY looks over screen and threatens her with fist.)

COLONEL. His mother-in-law?

Mollie (catching Harry's eye). Oh no, sir-perhaps I shouldn't have said that, sir. He expected no one, sir-

better go, sir—yes, sir. [EXIT D. C. quickly. COLONEL. Bless me what a stupid girl! I thought she

acted strange when she opened the door. (Looking off D. R. 1) Ah, there's a large portrait of my daughter-m-law. (To CHILTON, warmly rubbing hands together) See?

CHILTON. Rather a clever oil painting. I'll take a better

look at it.

COLONEL. Yes, do. My nephew had an eye for beauty when making his choice. [EXIT CHILTON D. R. 1.

COLONEL (to DOROTHY). I am glad I made the trip after all. Chilton would have turned me from it, but I've satisfied my mind that Arthur made no mistake in marrying and settling down. And as his guardian, I had a certain responsibility. (Dorothy appears rather downcast, which the COLONEL notices) There, there, my dear. Don't be downcast. I know of your little affection for the lad, but Arthur was never intended for you. Chauncey is my idea of an ideal match for you.

ENTER BAUER very breathlessly, D. C.

BAUER. Where is he? Where is dot feller who locked me in der room shust now? (Then observing COLONEL) Ach, excuse me, I didn't know somebody else vas in der room.

Colonel (surprised). Who are you?

BAUER. Who are you yourself a couple of times und see how you like it.

COLONEL. Do you know, sir, who I am?

Bauer (imitating him). Und do you know who I ain't? (Then after effective pause) You are probably one of der other boarders.

COLONEL. Nothing of the sort, sir; I am-

BAUER (interrupting). I got it! You are der fellow who stole from me, my room away.

Colonel. Why, you impudent puppy!

Bauer (snapping fingers in Colonel's face). Likewise, puppy-cakes for you, sir. I swore to myself, I would pull your nose der first time I—

Colonel (roaring). Pull my nose, sir? Pull my nose? BAUER. Don't you dink it possible? But you needn't to be alarmed. Now dot I see you got mit you your wife-(Referring to Dorothy.)

DOROTHY (indignantly). Wife!

BAUER. I forgive you der insult. (With bow) I am always a gentlemans.

COLONEL (to DOROTHY). The fellow's a lunatic!

BAUER (at D. C.). Had the oder fellow told me der circumferences, I would have moved mit bleasure. Only he was in such a rush he locked me in der room und forgot to leave der key. I am sorry for any disturbance I caused by forcing it open. (With bow) I apologize, und mit best wishes, believe me to be, sincerely yours, Rudolph Bauer.

[EXIT D. C., going L. Colonel. The fellow's clean gone.

BAUER (bobbing head in doorway c.) P.S. I will keep der room in der garrett. EXIT D. C. (Going up to D. C.

COLONEL. Did you ever see the like? and looking off) The janitor, very likely.

ENTER ARTHUR D. R. 3, hurriedly, having removed dressinggown and towel, and with hands outstretched.

ARTHUR. Uncle—uncle!

COLONEL (turning. Warmly). Arthur, my boy! Well, well. well!

ARTHUR (espying DOROTHY). And Dorothy! (Quickly to

her as if to kiss her.)

COLONEL (catching him by coat-tail). Hold on-hold on! Remember you're a married man now!

ARTHUR. By Jove, I forgot that.

DOROTHY (rather coldly). You're a nice one not to have met us at the pier.

ARTHUR. I'll tell you how that was. You see, Mollie neglected to hand me your letter until—

COLONEL. Mollie? Mollie? ARTHUR. Yes—our maid.

COLONEL. Didn't I say right away, Dorothy-she was a stupid thing? (ENTER CHILTON D. R. 1) Arthur-know Mr. Chilton, my secretary and Dorothy's affianced husband.

ARTHUR (starting). Then she isn't married yet? By Jove! COLONEL. They are engaged. (To CHILTON) My nephew,

Mr. Maitland.

ARTHUR (warmly shaking his hand). Say, I'm awfully glad you're not married.

CHILTON. Sir!

ARTHUR (letting go his hand, which he has been vigorously

shaking). You know what I mean.

Colonel. Chilton has been my secretary for several years now and I know of no man whom I would be prouder to have as my son-in-law. (To ARTHUR, looking around) You're nicely fixed.

ARTHUR (sadly). Fixed is putting it mildly. Colonel. Only, I'd discharge that janitor.

ARTHUR. Janitor?

COLONEL. Yes, he's as wild as a March hare. ARTHUR. Heavens! Which one do you mean?

COLONEL. Which one? Why, you haven't more than one, I hope.

DOROTHY. Dad means the old German.

ARTHUR (falling on chair). The old German! You don't mean to say you've seen him?

COLONEL. And spoken to him. His case is quite hopeless.

Why do you keep him around the house?

ARTHUR (aside). What shall I say. (To Colonel) He's an old veteran of the revolutionCOLONEL. Revolution?

ARTHUR. Boer war-I should say Civil war. Some war anyway—and I took pity on him. (Then to change subject)

But, uncle, I thought you seriously ill.

COLONEL. Had a narrow escape, my boy. Come near cashing in-but the doctor pulled me through-and then advised a sea voyage. Chauncey there (Referring to Chilton) didn't approve of our coming to America.

Chilton (nervously). I was afraid the excitement

would-

Colonel (patting him on shoulder). Always thinking of my welfare, Chauncey. (To ARTHUR) But I thought to kill two birds with one stone. Recover my health and visit you and your wife.

ARTHUR (starts). Oh yes-my wife! How nice.

Colonel. I admired your choice the moment I received her photograph. (Taking photograph from pocket) Splendid! splendid! (Confidentially) But tell me-who is she?

ARTHUR (giving start). Who is she? My wife—is my

wife.

Colonel. No, no, you don't catch my meaning. Comes of

a good family, I suppose; money?

ARTHUR. Well, not exactly too much of the latter. (Then with assumed dignity) Uncle, I'm surprised you would think me capable of marrying any woman for her money.

COLONEL (slapping him on shoulder). I'm prouder of you than ever. A simon-pure love match, eh? Capital! Capi-

tal! And your job?

ARTHUR (puzzled). My job?

COLONEL. How are the prospects for advancement?

ARTHUR. I've got a book at the publishers now that will pay me-

Colonel. No, no, not that nonsense. Aren't you a book-

keeper?

ARTHUR. A bookkeeper? Oh lor'!

COLONEL. Why, yes, in the factory! Your maid told

The maid told you? Then whatever she told ARTHUR.

you—I am.

Colonel. Don't be ashamed of your job, my boy. I started at the lowest rung of the ladder when just about your age and look at me now! (Strikes awkward pose.)
ARTHUR (aside). Just look at him!

Colonel. But to return to your domestic life. Are you happy?

ARTHUR (with sad face). Don't I look it? Supremely

happy.

COLONEL (close to him). And tell me—have you anything running around the house. (Illustrating with hands, height of about three feet) about so high?

ARTHUR. A picket fence.

COLONEL. No, no, I mean children.

ARTHUR, Children? Children? Oh, babies, you mean? Colonel (anxiously). Yes, yes-

ARTHUR. No.

COLONEL. I'm disappointed. However, when are we to see your wife?

ARTHUR (up quickly). I'll tell you about that. Had I ex-

pected you-

DOROTHY (anxiously). You don't mean to say she's not at home?

ARTHUR. I'm sorry. She went to the mountains for a lit-

tle recreation. COLONEL. Mountains? Why, your maid told us she was at home.

ARTHUR. Mollie told you that? CHILTON. She distinctly did.

ARTHUR (aside). I wonder what else she told them?

COLONEL (placing arm about ARTHUR). You can't hold me in longer suspense. Brace up! don't be ashamed of her, my boy. I shan't be a harsh critic. If she measures up to the photograph I'll be delighted. All I want, anyway, is to see you happy.

ENTER MOLLIE D. L. 3.

COLONEL (sharply). Oh here, girl. Ask Mrs. Maitland to step here.

Mollie (surprised). Mrs. Maitland, sir?

COLONEL. Yes-your mistress-my nephew's wife. (HARRY, bobbing over screen, threatens her and motions her to go.)

Mollie (confusedly). Oh, yes—my mistress—I forgot. [EXIT D. L. 3.

Colonel. Peculiar girl, that. Never seen her equal.

Arthur. You've a lot to see. But, uncle, you must forgive her. She's a new servant; only been with us a day.

Colonel. And she told me below, she'd been here a whole

year.

ARTHUR. Did she, really? To me it seems but a day.

(HARRY, out from behind screen, is taking long strides toward D. L. 1, but is seen by ARTHUR) Oh! Harry.

HARRY (comes to a stop). Oh lor'.

ARTHUR (to HARRY). Tell my wife—your wife—our wife -to come here a moment. [EXIT, nervously, HARRY D. L. 1. COLONEL. And pray, who was that?

ARTHUR. Him? Why, Harry's my-my secretary.

Colonel. Secretary? By Jove! you've got a more expensive household than I thought.

ENTER HARRY D. L. 1, leading MILLY by hand.

HARRY Come on, Milly-come on. (As she reluctantly ENTERS, he gives her a sudden jerk, confusedly bringing her to c.)

COLONEL. As I live-

ARTHUR (sheepishly). My wife!

COLONEL (offering hand). My dear daughter-in-law, you

don't know how glad I am to see you.

HARRY (L. of MILLY, nudges her. Aside to her). Go on, Milly—say something—do something.

MILLY (reluctantly taking his hand). Thank you.

COLONEL (presenting DOROTHY). My daughter, Dorothy, (Presenting CHILTON) and my secretary, Mr. Chilton.

CHILTON (bows). Delighted, I'm sure.

Colonel. We've come to pay you a brief visit.

ARTHUR (aside). I hope it's brief.
Colonel. But in that time hope to become better acquainted. And now, if you'll show us to our rooms, we'll remove the evidences of our long voyage.

ARTHUR (nervously, to MILLY). Wifey dear, show Unkie

to his room.

HARRY (nudges MILLY. Aside to her). Show him the big room.

MILLY (crosses to D. R. 1. Stammers). This w-w-way, please—this w—w—way.

HARRY (aside). Poor, poor Milly.

[EXIT HARRY D. L. 1, and MILLY, CHILTON and DOROTHY D. R. 1.

Colonel (follows them to D. R. 1, then turns and in whispers to ARTHUR). She's a little shy—but up to all my expectations.

ARTHUR. I'm glad you like her, uncle.

ENTER Jones D. C., wheeling baby-carriage.

ARTHUR (starts). Oh lor'. The carriage!

Jones (to Colonel). The girl told me to come right up. Your name Maitland?

COLONEL (interested. Referring to ARTHUR). There

stands Mr. Maitland.

Jones (steering carriage to him). This is for you.

ARTHUR (stammering). There must be some mistake.

Jones (consulting book). Nope! Here it is in black and white. Ordered and paid for by Arthur Maitland, this ad-

dress—all charges paid. (Arthur sinks on sofa.)
Colonel (joyously). My boy! my boy! your little secret is out. You have got a baby after all. I thought you were trying to keep something back. (Dances around, waving handkerchief) Hurrah! hurrah! I'm the happiest man in the world.

Jones. The girl signed the slip. (At D. c.) I knowed dere couldn't be no mistake. (Looking back at ARTHUR)

Gee! dese newly married guys give me a pain.

[EXITS D. C., going R.

COLONEL (dancing over to Arthur. Jubilantly). We'll keep it from Dorothy for a while. Surprise her—even though your proposed little joke on me came a cropper. (Sits alongside of him) What is it, Arthur—a boy or a girl?

ARTHUR (absent-mindedly). Neither.

COLONEL. Neither?

ARTHUR. No, no—(Then looking up) What do you want it to be? (Then quickly) I mean—(Then turning away) Oh, I don't know what to say.

Colonel (slapping him on shoulder). It's a boy-a boy!

I can see it by the twinkle in your eye.

ARTHUR (aside). Now my eyes are beginning to give me away. (To Colonel) But, supposing—
Colonel. I won't suppose anything. I'll cut you off with-

out a shilling if it's anything but a boy.

ARTHUR (disconsolately). Well, then—it's a boy!
Colonel. I knew it—I knew it. And of course you've named him Thaddeus after his uncle, eh?

ARTHUR. The fact is, she-I should say he-he hasn't

been christened as yet.

COLONEL. That so? We'll have to see to it then, before I go. I shall certainly want to act as godfather. (Up, pompously) Another unexpected pleasure! Ah, this has been a glorious day indeed.

ARTHUR (sadly). And it's just started! (BABY heard crying loudly off D. L. 1.)

ARTHUR (up). Great Scott—the kid!

Colonel. As I live, the little angel's voice. And softly cooing. (Starts to go L.) Let me go to him—let me—
Arthur (restraining him). No—his father is trying to

lull him to sleep!

COLONEL. His father?

ARTHUR. I should have said—his nurse!

Colonel (starts). What? Also a nurse? Great Scott, man, how do you manage it on your income? You've two janitors, a maid, a secretary, a man of all work, a nurse, and—(Harry dances on D. L. 1, a long-skirted baby in his arms and singing a lullaby) There he is there he is! (Follows after HARRY, as the latter waltzes around room, singing) Let me take him in my arms!

ARTHUR (same time, follows Colonel, endeavoring to draw

his attention) But, uncle, I forgot to tell you-

Colonel (finally halts Harry as he is about to EXIT D. L. 1). What do you mean, sir? What do you mean by making me chase you about that way?

HARRY. Did I ask you to chase me about?

Colonel. None of your impudence, sir. (Endeavoring to relieve him of baby) I want a look at that baby.

HARRY (pushing his hands away). Hold on there—just a

minute! Whose baby is this?

Colonel. Whose baby? My nephew's, of course. (Refers to ARTHUR.)

HARRY. Oh, that's it, eh?

Colonel (adjusting glasses—then chucking baby under chin). Cooche—cooche—cooche. (Looks from baby to ARTHUR several times) Takes right after his father!

HARRY (both business). ARTHUR S

Colonel (looking admiringly at baby). Got your eyes, nose and mouth, Arthur. By Jove, I feel twenty years younger. (To Harry) But you've got to stop dancing that child about that way.

HARRY. Oh, I have-have I?

COLONEL. And I'll take no back talk, either, even if you are my nephew's secretary.

HARRY. His secretary?

ARTHUR (loudly). My secretary.

COLONEL. I'll have you to understand, sir, I am this child's godfather. We're going to name him Thaddeus!

HARRY (starting). Thaddeus? Not if I-

COLONEL (pompously). After me, sir—after me! (Crossing to d. R. 1) And now I'll tell Dorothy to step here. (Waving hand to baby) Cooche, cooche, cooche! (Gives a chuckle.)

[EXIT all smiles d. R. 1.

ARTHUR (sighs and sinks on sofa). Whew! that's over!

HARRY (to Arthur). Not by any means! What's this Thaddeus business? I don't mind all that's already happened, but I'm hanged if I let that uncle of yours call this kid of mine Thaddeus! (At d. l. 1) I've got to draw the limit somewhere.

ARTHUR (disconsolately). My name will be mud, if this

continues.

ENTER DOROTHY D. R. 1.

Dorothy. Dad said you wanted to show me something.

ARTHUR. Your dad is a——(Then making room for her on sofa) Come over and sit down.

DOROTHY (hesitating). I hardly know whether it's proper

or not. You're a married-

ARTHUR. You mustn't take that married thing too seriously.

DOROTHY (surprised). Why, Arthur, how can you say

that.

ARTHUR (seriously). Honestly, Dorothy, there are a lot of things I'd like to say. (Motions to sofa) Sit down. (Dorothy sits.)

ARTHUR. I never expected to see you again.

DOROTHY (looking down). And I imagine, didn't much care.

ARTHUR. You know better than that, Dorothy. It was your dad who separated us. Remember the night he ordered me from the house?

DOROTHY. I shall never forget it.

ARTHUR. I told him I'd marry you some day in spite of everything; that I'd wait until eternity—

DOROTHY. And then you went right off and married someone else.

ARTHUR. No, no, Dorothy, you don't quite grasp the situation. I really have been waiting all these years.

DOROTHY. With your present wife at your side. Ridicu-

lous!

ARTHUR (irritated). Forget this other wife for a minute. I've worked and strived with the one thought uppermost in my mind; the thought that one day you would be my—

DOROTHY (up-alarmed). Gracious, Arthur-how strange you talk!

ARTHUR (passionately). Dorothy, I have never loved any

other woman but you. (Takes hold of her hand.)
DOROTHY. You must be mad! (Snatches hand away and goes R.)

ARTHUR. I want you to become my wife!

DOROTHY (at door R. 1). Your wife? The only excuse I can offer for your present conduct is that you've been drink-[EXIT haughtily D. R. 1. ing.

ARTHUR (staggered). By Jove, that's so. I always keep forgetting my other wife. (Now c.) I'll have a job making Dorothy understand, and the worst of it is, if I don't hurry, that Chilton fellow will very likely cut me out. (At D. L. 1) By Jove, I'll have to apologize to Harry for that baby incident. Can't afford to get him down on me too.

TEXIT D. L. 1.

ENTER MILLY D. R. 1, followed by CHILTON.

MILLY. This way, Mr. Chilton. (Pointing to D. R. 3)

You'll find your room right in there.

CHILTON. Thank you, madam, thank you. [EXIT D. R. 3. MILLY. My, what a time I've had in that room. What questions the old gentleman asked. I tried my best to answer them satisfactorily and do hope I haven't made a dreadful mess of things. (At D. C.) Oh, I do wish this day was over. TEXIT D. C. going L.

ENTER CHILTON D. R. 3, cautiously to D. C.

CHILTON. I'm awfully worried about this trip. (Looking off) All is quiet below. (Cautiously to D. R. 3) Anyway, I'll be greatly relieved once we're on the high seas again. [EXIT on tiptoes p. R. 3.

ENTER ARTHUR D. L. 1.

Harry's really touchy on that baby question. Can't be pacified. Will stand for anything but Thaddeusand I don't much blame him. (Bell rings below) Who can that be? (Up to screen) Whoever it is, I must be on guard. (Gets behind screen.)

ENTER Mollie D. C., followed by Mrs. Sheffield.

Mollie. This way, madam—this way.

Mollie. I'll tell the missus at once, ma'am. (Starts

toward p. L. 1) Pardon, ma'am, but are you also a new boarder?

Mrs. Sheffield. A new boarder? I should hope not. I'm Mrs. Sheffield.

Mollie (starting). The master's mother-in-law! Oh, yes

Mrs. Sheffield. Just a moment. Am I to understand,

my son-in-law takes in boarders?

Mollie. Well, before to-day there was only one-Mr. Maitland; but we've a party of English people and a German inventor who just came. (At D. L. 1) I'll tell the FEXIT D. L. 1.

Mrs. Sheffield (haughtily). So he takes in boarders, eh? (Looks around) Well, it looks like it. I might have known Milly would come to this when she married the fool. But she's got only herself to blame. I advised against the match time and time again.

ENTER HARRY hurriedly D. L. 1, with hands outstretched.

HARRY. Why, if it isn't dear-

Mrs. Sheffield (restraining him). Don't dear me. You know I'm not strong on soft soap. Where's Milly-where is my daughter?

HARRY (nervously). Be up in a minute. She's in the

kitchen.

Mrs. Sheffield (pointedly). Preparing dinner for the boarders, I suppose?

HARRY. Boarders? (Aside) Wow!

Mrs. Sheffield. The maid told me all about the English party—the inventor and the Lord only knows who else. Why didn't you let me know you were so hard up?

HARRY. Why, I—

MRS. SHEFFIELD. The idea of a Sheffield conducting a

common, ordinary hash-for-breakfast-dinner-and-supper affair. But you can be certain of one thing. I'll clear them all out before the day is over.

HARRY. Clear them out? You mustn't do that.

MRS. SHEFFIELD (pounding umbrella on sofa). Clear them

out at once! (Folding arms) Why aren't you at work?

HARRY. Why, the christening is to—

Mrs. Sheffifld. The christening, eh? Milly and I could have seen to that. You're wasting time. (Then changing tone) By the way, I don't suppose you've arranged for the parson?

HARRY. Why, I thought we'd all go to-

Mrs. Sheffield. Just like you. You thought-you thought! That's all you ever did do. I knew better than to take things for granted, so I asked the parson on the next block to call here and officiate. And now, where's the little tot? I'm anxious for a glimpse at her.

HARRY (pointing to D. L. 1). In the nursery, there, to the

left.

Mrs. Sheffield (at d. L. 1). There's just one thing else. She's to be named after me-her grandmother-do you understand that?

HARRY (meekly). Perfectly. You have a delightful way

of making your meaning clear.

Mrs. Sheffield. I'm glad that's settled without the usual row! My, what a temper you've got! I don't see how any woman can get on with you! [EXIT D. L. 1. HARRY (bitterly). Dear old soul. How I'll miss her when

[EXIT D. L. 1. she's gone.

ARTHUR (bobbing head over screen, looking after HARRY). Lucky Harry, (With sarcasm) to have a wife and mother-inlaw! (Bell rings below) And still they come. I wonder who this can be? (Out from behind screen, looks off D. C., then gives a start) Oh lor'! (Confusedly scrambles behind screen again.)

ENTER MOLLIE D. C., followed by REVEREND ORMSBY.

Mollie. I'll tell the missus. [EXIT D. L. 1. Ormsby (looking around). I've never had the pleasure of meeting the members of this family, though we've been neighbors for some time. Quite nicely situated. I'll have to----

ENTER COLONEL hurriedly D. R. 1.

COLONEL (To ORMSBY). Ah—you're here for the christening-what?

Ormsby. I believe that is my mission, sir.

Colonel (aside). Arthur took my tip and arranged it just to please me. (To ORMSBY) You know-I'm to be the child's godfather.

Ormsby. Indeed? Why, I thought the lady said—

COLONEL. My friend, the lady's got nothing to say. I'm running this affair. I've fixed it with the father. The child is to be christened Thaddeus.

ORMSBY. My word—there must be some mistake, for the

lady distinctly said-

Colonel (angrily). Must I repeat? Thaddeus is the name I chose. (Roaring) Thaddeus! Thaddeus! Thaddeus!

Orners. I heard you the first time. (Meekly) Thaddeus

it shall be.

Colonel (slapping him heavily on shoulder). Good! I'll just jump into my frock-coat and hurry right out. You'll wait, of course.

ORMSBY. I am at your service, sir. [EXIT COLONEL D. R. 1) Singular I should have imagined the lady said the

child was to be-

ENTER MRS. SHEFFIELD D. L. 1.

MRS. SHEFFIELD. I'm so glad you didn't delay. ORMSBY. I am usually quite punctual, madam.

Mrs. Sheffield. Everything is in readiness. If you'll just step this way. (Points L.)

Ormsby. But the old gentleman in that room-the

child's godfather-

Mrs. Sheffield. Godfather? You must be mistaken. I told you that I would act as godmother.

Ormsby. And he told me-

Mrs. Sheffield. Never mind what anyone else told you.

I'm running this affair.

Ormsby. There seems to be no end of running. Those were also his very words. (*Meekly*) However, as you wish, madam.

Mrs. Sheffield. You'll find the child awaiting you in

that room.

Ormsby. Very well, madam. [EXIT D. L. 1.

ARTHUR (out from behind screen, hurries to D. L. 1, looks off). If uncle happens to burst in upon that christening—all is lost. I have it. (Over to D. R. 1. ENTER CHILTON D. R. 3, espies ARTHUR at D. R. 1, gives a start, then cautiously over to screen, partially concealing himself behind same, intently watching ARTHUR, who glances around) The key's in the lock! I'll lock him in until it's over! (Turns key) There! so much for that!

ENTER HARRY D. L. 1.

HARRY. Oh, here you are. Hurry, old man. Baby's getting fidgety. We're waiting for you inside.

ARTHUR (nervously). Yes—that's so. In a minute—a minute.

HARRY. Want you as a witness, you know. [EXIT D. L. 1. ARTHUR. I hope he didn't witness what I was doing. (Over to D. L. 1) Thank goodness uncle is safe for a time.

[EXIT D. L. 1.

CHILTON (bobs head over screen). Now I wonder what all that meant? (BAUER suddenly appears c. and glances mysteriously about. CHILTON sees him) Oh lor'! (Quickly

down.

BAUER (quickly over to D. R. 3, looks off; then hurriedly to D. L. 1, looks off; then over to D. R 1. and after glancing around to see no one is watching, tries door) Locked! (Gets on knees before door and peers through key-hole) No one in dere—only der old feller. Hello! dere are a couple of more rooms leading from dot one. Maybe I am mistooken after all. (Cautiously to D. C.) Anyways, I keep mine eyes TEXITS D. C. open.

CHILTON (bobbing head over screen). The mystery deep-

ens! Who can he be?

COLONEL (from within D. R. 1). Hello, the door's locked? Now, who the—(Then calls aloud) Oh, I say—hello there, without!

CHILTON. The Colonel! (Out from behind screen and

over to D. R. 1) What is it, Colonel?

COLONEL (within). Some one's locked the door by mistake. CHILTON (glancing L. before speaking). On purpose I should say.

Colonel (within. Roaring). Eh, what's that? What do

CHILTON. I saw your precious son-in-law turn the key

and say, "I'll lock him in, until it's over.

COLONEL (within). I see the scheme! Then he tried to keep the news away on purpose. (Bitterly) Going to name the brat Arthur instead of Thaddeus! (Pounds on door) But I won't allow it! I'll stop it—stop it—stop it—do you hear?

Chilton (anxiously glancing L.). The christening appears

to be in full blast already.

Colonel (within, Groaning). And I'm to be kept away until it's over. Precious scoundrel! Oh, what shall I do?

CHILTON (anxiously). Isn't there another door—a door leading into my room?

COLONEL (within. Suddenly). Eh? By Jove you're

right. (Then sadly) But that's also locked. (Suddenly) Hello, the transom! I'll risk my neck on that.

CHILTON (glances L.). You'll have to hurry. They're

nearing the end.

COLONEL (excitedly, within). Oh, what a trick to play! But I'll make him sweat for the deception.

CHILTON. Hurry, hurry!
COLONEL (within). Coming, coming! (A loud glass crash heard off D. R. 1.)

CHILTON. There goes the transom! (Another loud crash)
And there the Colonel!

COLONEL (whining off D. R. 1). Coming! Coming! (Extra loud crash D. R. 1.)

ENTER Ormsby carrying baby, excitedly from D. L. 1, followed by Mrs. Sheffield, Arthur, Milly and Harry.

ALL. What has happened? (ENTER COLONEL D. R. 1, his hair disheveled, a red smudge on his nose, his shirt sleeves torn, his collar and tie awry) The Colonel!

COLONEL (furiously, to ORMSBY). So, it's over, eh? Tell

me the worst! Is it Arthur or Thaddeus?

Ormsby (nervously). Beg pardon, sir-neither! I named

her Margarite!

Colonel (gives a roar). Margarite! Oh lor'! (Groans and sinks limply into CHILTON'S arms. ORMSBY, nervously fumbling baby, finally holds her upside down; then as MILLY gives a horrified scream, confusedly corrects the error.)

PICTURE.

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Scene, as in Act 1. No change in setting. Table is cleared, and a fancy spread over same; also some books, and a vase with cut flowers. Time, 10 A. M.

ENTER COLONEL D. R. 1, putting on coat and hat, followed by DOROTHY.

DOROTHY. But, father—— COLONEL (angrily). Not a word. The fellow deceived me

and I'm through with him forever. (With sarcasm) "I named her Margarite." (Angrily) And I thought it a boy! (Bitterly) Miserable deceiver! (To Dorothy) Go get your things packed. We'll leave as soon as I am able to arrange for other quarters. [EXIT DOROTHY D. R. 1. COLONEL (adjusting gloves). We'll see if I am to be—

ENTER Mollie, sleepily D. C. Yawns. Then seeing Col-ONEL, starts.

Mollie. Oh. gee!

COLONEL (referring to MOLLIE). Another part of the household. A fine crowd-all of them. (To Mollie) See here, girl, where's the nearest telephone station.

Mollie (sleepily). At the druggist's, sir, on the corner. Colonel. Good. I'll call up a hotel in New York and arrange for rooms. (Starts for D. C.)

MOLLIE. Going out, sir?

Colonel (turning angrily). No-coming in, stupid! Bah! [EXIT D. C. going R.

Mollie (looking after him). Nice old party that. So gentle and kind. (Commences to dust furniture) And from the way they all act there's something wrong somewhere. Don't act at all like real boarders.

ENTER BAUER quickly D. C.

BAUER (dramatically). Ha! ha!

Mollie (gives a start). Oh, gracious! (Moves away from him.)

Bauer (taking long strides down to her). Do you want to make ten thousand dollars?

Mollie (dropping duster). Ten thousand what?

BAUER. Dollars! (Spelling) D-double O-double Ldouble S- Dollars!

Mollie (fainting in his arms). Tell me all about it one dollar at a time.

BAUER (struggling with her). Yes-but blease don't take me for a jass-ass. Lean on your own self for a while.

Mollie (recovering). Ten thousand dollars! I didn't know there was so much money in the world.

BAUER. It's half of vat I git if I am successful. (With a smile) Und mebbee I might include myself in der bargain besides.

Mollie. Do you mean that for a proposal?

BAUER. Don't it listen dot way?

Mollie (drawing away. Aside). He's looney sure!

BAUER. All you got to did-is to watch der wrists of all the hoarders.

Mollie. The wrists!

BAUER. Chessir! Wrists!

MOLLIE (draws well away from him). That's enough for me.

BAUER (confidentially). Ven you see someone mit a cross tattooed on his left wrist-tell me und you get der ten thousand. Is it not easy?

MOLLIE. Gee, that's hardly the name for it.

BAUER (close to her). So it's a bargain, vat?

Mollie (alarmed, drawing away from him). Help! help!

BAUER. Vat! you are not frightened to see me?

Mollie (trembling D. c.). N-0; just tickled to death. Bauer (seriously). Remember ven you see der cross on

der wrist you— (Gradually drawing close to her.)

Mollie (running to D. L. 1). Help-help!

BAUER (puzzled). Won't you let me explanation-

MOLLIE (confusedly). Help—help! [EXIT D. L. 1. BAUER (sighs). She dinks I am off my noodle. Strange ideas dese peoples git.

ENTER MRS. SHEFFIELD D. C.

Bauer (espying her). Ach, madam—maybe you will help me.

Mrs. Sheffield (haughtily). Help you? In what way? BAUER (finger to lips, mysteriously glancing around). Can you keep a secret?

Mrs. Sheffield (haughtily). Am I not a woman?

BAUER. Nuff sed. In two minutes der whole world knows it. It is quicker as wireless telegraphy. (Takes hold of her left wrist and brings her down stage) S-h. (Glances around) I am looking for a man mit a cross tattooed on his left wrist.

Mrs. Sheffield (alarmed). Gracious, what a quest!

BAUER. Now I can't do it myself. It looks suspicious und give der snap away. I thought if you could git in conversations mit each man folks und could make out you will tell his fortune—you see? Den you get a chance to see his wrist und if he is got a cross tattooed—den you tell me-und presto! We divide der twenty thousand dollars.

Mrs. Sheffield (cautiously crossing to D. L. 1.). I am in

danger! The man's not right!

BAUER. Is it a go?

Mrs. Sheffield (at d. l. 1). A go? I'm going—as fast [EXIT quickly D. L. 1. as I can.

For why do dese peoples turn my BAUER. I give it up. offer down dot way?

ENTER D. C., ARTHUR with newspaper.

BAUER. Ach, you are shust my man!

ARTHUR (turning and about to EXIT again). Is that so? BAUER (catching him by coat, before he EXITS and dragging him down c.). Hold on-hold on. You want to earn ten thousand dollars?

ARTHUR. Yes, providing I don't have to work for it. But I do hope you're not going to tell me about the tattooed

wrist again?

BAUER. Ach, den you know about it?

ARTHUR. I should hope so. You've explained it—as only you can explain it—a half dozen times.

Bauer (mysteriously). S-h. Den you are in on it?

ARTHUR. And out of it too.

BAUER (at D. C.). You are der first sensible person I have seen around here since I arrived. Remember, der cross on the wrist. It's worth ten thousand dollars. [EXIT D. C. ARTHUR (going up and looking after him). That fellow

has less regard for money than any one I know.

ENTER HARRY D. L. 3.

HARRY. Oh, here you are. ARTHUR. What's up now?

HARRY (angrily). Everything. This thing has got to come to a halt.

ARTHUR. What thing?

HARRY. Oh, you know well enough. I'll lend you my wife no longer. (On sofa) From now on my wife—is my wife.

ARTHUR (sits alongside HARRY). For heaven's sake, Harry,

HARRY (turning on him). Do you think me unreasonable? ARTHUR. S-h, not so loud.

HARRY. I don't care—it's all off, I tell you.

ARTHUR. Be serious, old man. Only let it go on for a few hours longer.

HARRY. A few hours? Look what's happened in the past

thirty minutes! That uncle of yours seems to think Milly his personal property. Then look how narrowly little Margarite escaped being named Thaddeus! (Pacing floor) Just think of a girl being called that!

ARTHUR. Don't take on so.

HARRY. Oh, it isn't me so much. It's Milly. She'll let the cat out of the bag the next time your uncle tries to kiss her.

ARTHUR. Uncle's got an affectionate manner.

HARRY. And a worse nerve. But he'd better steer clear of the old lady. She's on the war-path and you know what that means.

ARTHUR. I am blessed with a vivid imagination. Perhaps I'd better have a talk with her. (Starts toward D. L. 1.)

HARRY. Precious little chance you'll get.

ARTHUR. Don't forget, old friend, that in my time I've faced the wild beasts in the African jungle. [EXIT D. L. 1. HARRY. You've got a surprise coming. (Sinks on sofa)

By Jove, I wish this was over.

ENTER MILLY D. C.

MILLY (down to HARRY). Has he gone for good?

HARRY. Who?

MILLY. That awful Colonel. I saw him leave the house some time ago.

HARRY. I'm afraid not.

MILLY (sits beside him on sofa). Mother is in the kitchen and is furious.

HARRY (glancing toward D. L. 1.). Poor Arthur.

MILLY. Demanded to know who the Colonel really was and when I told her—a boarder, she demanded to know why I permitted him to kiss me a while ago.

HARRY. What did you say?

MILLY. What could I say? I burst into tears. HARRY. A woman's privilege. And then—
MILLY. And then mama burned her finger—

HARRY (laughing). And you laughed!

Milly. I did nothing of the sort. (Starting to rise) How could you say such a thing.

HARRY (quickly taking her by hand). Forgive me, Milly. Please don't run away.

ENTER COLONEL D. C.

COLONEL (espying them, starts. Aside). Hello-what's

this? Arthur's wife and the secretary! (Gets behind screen.)

HARRY (drawing MILLY back on sofa). Sit down. I'll

never say it again.

MILLY (slowly sits). I know you didn't mean it.

HARRY. Merely a slip of the tongue. (Close to her) Now don't let this worry you any longer. We'll soon be rid of Arthur and his relations.

Colonel (bobbing over screen). So that's it, eh?

MILLY (close to HARRY). And then, I hope, things will go on as of old.

HARRY. Yes, my dear, as of old.

Colonel (watching them. Aside). If Arthur could only see this? And I thought her—

MILLY. I feel sorry for Arthur in a way, but yet we must

consider our happiness.

HARRY. A rare good fellow—but his own worst enemy. We must, however, keep up the deception for a while longer.

Colonel (aside). A while longer, eh? The plot thickens!
Milly. Do you think it wise? I had hoped it would be
no longer necessary.

COLONEL (looking over screen. Angrily aside). Hear the

heartless creature!

HARRY. I think it best to keep it up until the coast is clear. And now, dear, we must not be seen together again until—(The COLONEL gives a roar and then down behind screen. HARRY glances around) Did you hear that? (Quickly) Someone is coming. Quick, a kiss. (They kiss. The COLONEL bobs up in time to witness it. HARRY rises from sofa and over to D. L. 1) And now we had better be going. I believe even Arthur will be relieved when once the truth is out.

MILLY. Oh, I know he will. [EXIT D. L. 1, arm in arm. Colonel (out, looking after them). Deceiving couple! Poor Arthur! Miserable fellow that he is, I pity him in his domestic life. And kissing each other openly, where everyone could see them. Oh, women, women, you are all alike. (A crash heard off D. L. 3, and the rattling of tins) Great heavens—what was that?

ENTER Arthur hurriedly d. l. 1, his hair disheveled, tie and collar awry, and flour spattered over his clothing. A tin pail is thrown after him.

COLONEL. Arthur! Where have you been?

ARTHUR (nervously). In the jungle—I mean kitchen! Harry's mother-in-law—I should say, my mother-in-law, has a pleasant manner of her own. (Gingerly glancing off L. 1.) Thank goodness, the storm is over. (Coming down. To Colonel) Uncle, I'm sorry you should have witnessed this.

Colonel. My boy, I've seen a great deal more. (Looking around before continuing, then close to Arthur) My boy,

you are being deceived!

ARTHUR (starting). Deceived! Eh, what? By whom?

COLONEL. Your secretary.

ARTHUR. My secretary?

Colonel (hoarsely). The same!

ARTHUR (in mock agony. Sinking on sofa). Ye Gods! Colonel (patting him on back). There, there—better to know the worst now than later. You deceived me about the baby and driven me from your home—

ARTHUR (quickly looking up). Uncle, you're not going

away?

COLONEL. Yes, I've arranged to go to the Hotel Royal within the next half hour.

ARTHUR. You ought not to do that. I wasn't entirely to

blame for the way things happened.

Colonel. We'll not discuss that now. I'm disappointed with you and your entire household. Still I can't help pitying you and I don't propose to see you robbed of your happiness. (*Emphatically*) You must fight this scoundrel a duel.

ARTHUR (rising). A duel?

COLONEL. Yes. He kissed your wife!

ARTHUR. My wife?

COLONEL. Think of it—your wife and before my very eyes.

ARTHUR. Villain!

COLONEL. Where I come from it would call for the fellow's life. (Over to table, taking up pen) I'll write the challenge. Arthur (protesting). But uncle, perhaps he didn't mean

to do it.

Colonel (turning sharply). Didn't mean to kiss her? Bah! I'm beginning to think you're afraid of your rival.

ARTHUR (timidly). Oh, no, uncle-not a bit.

Colonel (writing). I'll make it as curt and nasty as possible. The less formality, the deeper the shaft should pierce.

ARTHUR (aside). Poor Harry. What a lot of trouble I have caused you and now—

Colonel. Listen to this! (Reading) "Sir: I hereby challenge you to a duel to the death." (Looking up) How's that for a starter.

ARTHUR. Sounds like a finisher.

Colonel (reading). "You know the reason why. I have observed your sneaking methods and you can only answer for your contemptible methods with your life." (Looking up) That ought to get him.

ARTHUR. Ought to get us both.

COLONEL. And to cap the climax—I've signed your name to it.

ARTHUR. Why didn't you sign your own?

COLONEL (irritated). Simpleton! It's your duel!
ARTHUR (aside). Harry must never receive that note.
COLONEL (folding note). Now to get it to him!

ENTER Mollie excitedly D. C.

Mollie. Oh, sir, the gentleman in the garret is com-

pletely out of his head I'm afraid.

COLONEL. Never mind that, we've got something more important to attend to. (Holding out note) Hand this to Mr. Maitland's secretary!

. Mollie. Mr. Maitland's who, sir?

COLONEL (irritated). Confound the girl. (To ARTHUR)

What's the fellow's name?

ARTHUR (troubled). His name, uncle, his name? (Then suddenly) Why, Bauer, sir. (To Mollie) Hand it to Mr. Bauer!

Mollie (taking note). Is it—is it his note to leave?

COLONEL. Worse than that. (Over to D. R. 3.)

Mollie (at D. C.). Oh, I'm so glad. He's most frightened me to death since he's been here. I'll give it to him right away.

[EXIT D. C., going L.]

Colonel (to Arthur, who has seated himself on sofa). I've got a brace of guns and other weapons among my things. And by the by, I'll ask Chilton to act as your other second. Now don't get nervous. The end is near. [EXIT D. R. 3.

ARTHUR (looking up). I know it is! (Up to D. C.) The old German won't probably understand what it all means. Lucky I thought to give his name.

ENTER DOROTHY D. R. 1.

DOROTHY. Arthur! (Then turns as if to EXIT again.) ARTHUR (turning). Dorothy! Just a minute. Don't run away.

DOROTHY (pouting). I'm surprised you should speak to

me again after-

ARTHUR. After what? (Looking around, before speaking) Don't be hard on me, Dorothy. I'm not half as bad as you think-

DOROTHY. And that's bad enough.

ARTHUR. Come over here, Dorothy, where we can talk things over. I want to make a clean breast of everything.

DOROTHY. You've a lot to answer for.

ARTHUR (urging her). Come on. DOROTHY. And if your wife should see us——?

ARTHUR. Oh, hang my wife!

DOROTHY. Arthur! You're more heartless than I imagined.

ARTHUR. Haven't you guessed the truth before this? (Glancing around before speaking) I'm not married!

DOROTHY. Not married! You're a widower?

ARTHUR. Luckier than that. A bachelor.

DOROTHY. Then your wife——ARTHUR. Isn't my wife at all.

DOROTHY. Why, Arthur-

ARTHUR. She belongs to Harry Brown. I just borrowed

DOROTHY (coming to him). Whatever does it all mean? Are you telling the truth? (Sits on sofa.)

ARTHUR. Oh, I had to do it, Dorothy, to keep the wolf from the door. Your father seemed to want me married and T----

DOROTHY. But, Arthur; what of that baby?

ARTHUR (lightly). Also borrowed. Property of Harry Brown. Oh, Harry's a lucky chap—and a good fellow besides. When I learned of your father's coming—he willingly came to my rescue.

DOROTHY. I don't think it was nice to deceive dad that

wav.

ARTHUR. Neither do I—but honestly, can you blame me? DOROTHY. Dad will never forgive you for the deception. ARTHUR. I don't care so long as you do.

ENTER CHILTON D. R. 3.

CHILTON (espying ARTHUR, starts. Aside). So! So! I'm just in time!

ARTHUR. Surely you're not going to marry that Chilton fellow?

DOROTHY (looking down). Dad's mind is set on it.

ARTHUR. And what's to become of me? Have you forgotten your promise of long ago?

DOROTHY. Those surely were our happy days.

ARTHUR. You promised to wait for me.

DOROTHY. Yes—but not forever. When I heard you were married——

ARTHUR. Don't forget you didn't hear of it until after I'd heard of your engagement to this Chilton chap. I thought it all over then—and I did the next best thing.

DOROTHY. I don't really care for Chauncey-that's why

the wedding has been so long deferred.

ARTHUR. By Jove, Dorothy—do you know, I believe fate has been kinder to us than we dreamed. What do you say,

to our becoming married—

CHILTON (stepping down R.). Stop where you are! (ARTHUR and DOROTHY both rise confusedly. Crossing to ARTHUR) You, sir, shall answer to me for this. (Then to DOROTHY) And as for you, Madam. (DOROTHY turns on her heel and giving him a contemptuous look, haughtily EXITS D. R. 1.)

CHILTON (dramatically handing ARTHUR card). My card, sir. The Colonel asked me to act as your second in a certain duel—but the scene I just witnessed makes me one of the principals in another. What is it to be—swords or

pistols?

ARTHUR. Hold on, old man, you're rushing things. Chilton (stamping foot). Swords or pistols?

ARTHUR. Well, since you look at it that way—both!

Chilton ($sinking\ on\ sofa$). Beaten! beaten! unless the Colonel arranges for an immediate marriage. And after working all these years! (Up) I'll have a talk with the old

man at once. (Starts for D. R. 3.)

ENTER D. C., Mrs. Sheffield with several letters in her hand.

Mrs. Sheffield (to Chilton). Just a moment, sir.

CHILTON (halts). Well, Madam.

Mrs. Sheffield. I want to hand you this.

CHILTON (taking letter). What is it?

Mrs. Sheffield. A notice to leave, sir—and at once. I'm giving them to all the lodgers. From henceforth, this is no longer a boarding house.

CHILTON (tearing notice into pieces and casting them on floor). That shows what I think of your notice!

[EXIT D. R. 3.

Mrs. Sheffield (shouting after him). Very well; then I'll get a lawyer and have you put out!

ENTER D. L. 3, Harry in coat-sleeves, wearing an apron around his waist and carrying a towel and plate in his hands. Sits on sofa with a sigh.

HARRY. What is home with a mother-in-law!

Mrs. Sheffield (down c. Confronting him). I'll show you in about three minutes!

HARRY (rises confusedly and begins to hurriedly wipe

plate). Oh, lor'.

MRS. SHEFFIELD. Did you finish wiping those dishes as I told you to?

HARRY. I was just on the last lap when-

MRS. SHEFFIELD (sternly). Then go back to the kitchen. You brute, to expect your poor little wife to do the work for this entire household.

HARRY (at D. L. 3.). Now see here, I object to-

Mrs. Sheffield (stamping foot). Silence! Not a word! To the kitchen! Do you hear?

HARRY. Yes, ma'am-I hear all right.

EXIT meekly D. L. 3.

Mrs. Sheffield (looking after him). Milly's spoiled that man. In a week's time, I hope to make him an ideal husband. [EXIT D. L. 3.

ENTER D. R. 3, COLONEL excitedly, followed by CHILTON.

COLONEL. Impossible, impossible, I can't believe my daughter would do such a thing.

CHILTON. I tell you I saw the whole thing with my own

eyes. I immediately challenged the fellow to a duel.

COLONEL. You should have killed him on the spot. What a villain! I cast him off! He is no longer a nephew of mine. I'm through with him forever. I now don't blame his wife for flirting with another.

CHILTON. And you were saying, Colonel, when we-

Colonel. Ah, yes. You'd better arrange for an immediate wedding. Hunt up a parson. I'll fetch Dorothy around. The sooner this thing is over—the better. Don't waste a second. Hurry, hurry.

CHILTON (warmly shaking Colonel's hand). Thank you, Colonel. You've given me renewed courage.

[EXIT D. C. going R.

Colonel. It will serve the boy right if Chilton forces him into a deadly combat.

ENTER D. L. 3, Mrs. Sheffield holding note toward Colonel.

MRS. SHEFFIELD. For you, sir.

COLONEL (taking note). Why, what?

MRS. SHEFFIELD. It's a notice to quit, sir—and at once.

Colonel (puzzled). Quit?

Mrs. Sheffield. Vamoose—leave the house— (Close to him) get out!

COLONEL (indignant). I like that. So it comes from him,

does it?

MRS. SHEFFIELD. From the owner of the house. He told

me to hand it to you.

COLONEL. And he is handing it to me in many ways. (Over to D. R. 1.) Very well, Madam. We'll get out. But you can tell him one thing. I know all about his lovemaking to my Dorothy a while ago! [EXIT D. R. 1.

MRS. SHEFFIELD (astounded). Now I know Harry's reason for leaving the dishes and sneaking up here. It was to meet this Dorothy! Love-making, eh? Well he'll not repeat the performance after I'm through with him. (Begins to roll up sleeves and angrily starts to EXIT L. 3.)

ENTER BAUER furiously D. C. with a letter in his hand.

BAUER. A challenge, eh? To fight a duel to der death! (To Mrs. Sheffield) Perhaps, madam, you can tell me who wrote me dot?

Mrs. Sheffield (handing him a note). I can tell you who

wrote this one.

BAUER (puzzled). Another? (Looking at note) Vat iss it?

Mrs. Sheffield. A notice to vacate at once.

BAUER. Vass iss dot—vacate? I have paid two weeks' board only dis morning, in advance.

MRS. SHEFFIELD. That makes no difference to me.

BAUER. Vell it makes one to me.

MRS. SHEFFIELD. Your room is preferred to your company. The order is imperative. Either get out or be put out! [EXIT D. L. 3.

BAUER. So dot iss it, eh? Vell if I go-something goes mit me, you bet on it. Silver-ware, cut-glasses, anything I get me my hands on. (Looking at note) But who could have sent me dot challenge? Dot's a clue! I work it for all it is worth. Maybe it is der missing link. (Suddenly) Ah, now I hear footsteps approaching. (Gets behind screen) Maybe it is him!

ENTER CHILTON breathlessly D. C.

CHILTON. I did that in jig time. I'm dreadfully nervous. Once we're married, I'll persuade the Colonel to return to England. (Down c.)

BAUER (out from behind screen, cautiously down to CHILTON. Suddenly confronting him). Oscuse me blease,

but you don't know me, vat?

CHILTON (starts guiltily). I've never had the pleasure of

an introduction.

BAUER. Vell I know you. If you don't mind, let me take

a look at your left wrist.

CHILTON (alarmed). You must be mad! I won't listen to you! (Calls aloud) Help! Help! (Moves around table.)

BAUER (follows after him). Don't be afraid. It only takes a second. Shust one glance at your wrist—dot iss all.

CHILTON (wildly). Help! Help.

ENTER COLONEL D. R., with an old sword in one hand, a large old fashioned revolver in the other.

COLONEL. What is it?

CHILTON (nervously referring to BAUER). This fellow's suddenly gone mad!

BAUER. Not a bit of it. I only want to see if he's got a cross tattooed on his left wrist.

COLONEL. Ridiculous!

CHILTON. What did I tell you? (Quickly moves over to

R. of stage behind table.)

COLONEL. A hopeless case. (Approaching BAUER) Come, sir. We'll take you to your friends. (Brandishes sword and revolver.)

BAUER (business). Ober please I don't want to go to my friends. Please be more careful mit dose executioners.

(CHILTON suddenly scrambles under table.)

COLONEL (forcing BAUER, against D. R. 3.). Go into that room or I fire.

BAUER. But, sir, you don't know who I am.

Colonel. Neither do I care. (Firmly) Into that room! Bauer. You are making a mistake. If you will only help me I give you half of der twenty thousand dollars!

COLONEL (firmly). Into that room! And quick about it!

BAUER (despairingly). Too late! Too late!

[EXIT D. R. 3.

Colonel (quickly to d. R. 3, locking it). A hopeless case! Now for the authorities!

ENTER HARRY D. L. 3, followed by Mrs. Sheffield.

HARRY. I won't stand this any longer. (Espying Colonel) Ah, there he is. Did you tell this lady I was making love to your daughter?

Colonel (weapons behind his back). I never said any-

thing of the sort, sir.

Mrs. Sheffield. Never said anything of the sort? (Advancing upon him threateningly) Do you mean to infer that I—

Colonel (producing weapons). Hold on-hold on!

(Brandishes them.)

MRS. SHEFFIELD (gives a scream and hurriedly over in front of d. R. 3.) Help, help!

HARRY (excitedly). He's mad!

Colonel (referring to Bauer in room). The worst case I ever saw. Wanted me to help find the tattooed mark. (Harry and Mrs. Sheffield both exchange signals, denoting

Colonel is mentally wrong.)

Colonel (watching them). They've got it too. It's contagious! Everybody's got it! (Cautiously over to bell rope near D. C.) Why, oh why didn't Arthur notify us he conducted a sanitarium! (Pulls bell-cord. Then to Harry) Don't you move! Don't you move!

Mrs. Sheffield (leaning against D. R. 3). Help! Help!

Colonel. Nor you either. (Brandishing weapons.)

ENTER MOLLIE D. C.

MOLLIE. Did you ring, sir? (Then espying COLONEL with weapons, gives a cry and starts for door.)

Colonel (in commanding tone). Stand where you are. You shan't desert me in that fashion. Summon the police!

MRS. SHEFFIELD. Yes, the police!

COLONEL. And at once!

Mollie (quickly off-calling). Police! Police! COLONEL. Where can Dorothy be? (Then aloud) Chilton! Chilton! Where are you?

CHILTON (bobbing head from under table). I'm here. sir-

at your service!

COLONEL. We'll be out of this in a moment.

HARRY. If the police will only arrive.

BAUER (off R. 3). Let me out! Let me out! (All give

a start.)

Colonel (wildly brandishing weapons). Be calm every-body! be calm! You are safe in my hands!

ENTER O'FLYNN D. C.

O'FLYNN. What's this disturbance? I could hear ye a

block away!

Colonel (brandishing weapons). I've had the time of my life, officer. Do your duty! Better take them all in charge! O'FLYNN. You don't look any too healthy yourself.

(Seizes Colonel by lapel of coat.)

Mrs. Sheffleld. That's it, officer. You came just in

time.

HARRY (waving hands). Away with him!
COLONEL. But, officer, I protest. I'm not the one. The man you want is in that room. His specialty is crosses and

O'FLYNN (dragging Colonel to D. C.). You've got a few

specialties of your own. Now don't make any trouble.

COLONEL. This is outrageous. I'll appeal to the English

Consul!

O'FLYNN (endeavoring to quiet him). That's all right, me friend. You can go as far as you like. Only be sensible now and come along quietly. (Drags Colonel off C., going R., the Colonel continuing his protestations until they die out in the distance.)

Mrs. Sheffield (gives a moan). Thank goodness, its over— (Faints in Harry's arms.)

HARRY. More trouble-more trouble!

ENTER ARTHUR D. L. 3.

ARTHUR. What's all the noise? (Then espying HARRY) What's happened? (Takes handkerchief from pocket and begins to fan Mrs. Sheffield.)

HARRY (struggling with Mrs. Sheffield). It's all your fault! You're the cause for everything!

ENTER MILLY D. L. 3.

MILLY. I heard a terrible racket up here! (Then espying MRS. SHEFFIELD) Mother! Mother! (Over to her) What is it?

HARRY. Just fainted-that's all. Help me get her into

the other room.

MILLY (taking Mrs. Sheffield by L. arm). Poor, poor, mama. (Assists HARRY to D. L. 3, with her.)

ARTHUR (who has shown great concern). Anything I can do, old man?

HARRY. Yes—clear out! and take your family with you!

We were happy until your uncle arrived!

EXIT Mrs. Sheffield, Milly and Harry D. L. 3. ARTHUR (puzzled). I don't quite get the drift of things. What new complication can have arisen?

CHILTON (bobbing head from under table). I can tell you. ARTHUR (espying him). You? What in the world are you doing under that table.

CHILTON. It's a long story. (Offering left hand) Here,

lend a hand. I'm so stiff I—

ARTHUR. Certainly. (Quickly takes his hand, then suddenly looking at wrist, starts) Hello, old man. That's a

queer looking mark on your wrist.

CHILTON (quickly withdrawing hand, and up). Yes, rather—had it tattooed when a boy. (Then changing subject) But you've got to do something to save your uncle. He's been arrested.

ARTHUR. Arrested?

CHILTON. Yes—by mistake.

ARTHUR (sinking on sofa). Arrested, eh? (Laughing

heartily) That is a good joke.

CHILTON (angrily). So that's it, eh? Well, your uncle can be glad he's at least got one friend to help him out of his difficulty. And just remember, we've a duel to fight. (At door c.) I'm off to the police station.

[EXIT D. C. going R. ARTHUR. I believe he's as afraid of that duel as I am. (Then up to R. C.) Uncle arrested, eh? Well that is a lark. (Then becoming serious) But, Dorothy! I wonder does she know? (Crash off R. 3) Hello! (Another crash) There it goes again!

ENTER BAUER hurriedly D. R. 3.

Bauer. He's gone!

ARTHUR (gives a start). The German inventor again!

BAUER (over to D. C.). But he don't fool me dis time.

I got him good und blenty. To der police station, eh? Well dot's der blace for me. [EXIT D. C., going R. ARTHUR. I see it all now, uncle must have been mis-

taken for our friend with the black cross mania (Suddenly) And that reminds me. Chilton had a cross on his wrist! Can it be possible there is something in it after all?

ENTER DOROTHY D. R. 1.

DOROTHY. Arthur! I'm so glad you weren't killed!

ARTHUR. Killed?

DOROTHY. Dad threatened all manner of vengeance on your head before he left the house.

ARTHUR. Oh. he did—did he?

DOROTHY. And when I heard that awful noise I thought he was keeping his vow. He also insists that I marry Mr. Chilton immediately. Where is dad, now?

ARTHUR. Your father? (Hesitatingly) Your father left

the house only a moment ago.

DOROTHY. For the parson! That's it! And will probably return immediately.

ARTHUR. And probably not. The one thing left for us to do-is get married.

DOROTHY. If only we dared.

ARTHUR I'd dare anything just now. (Bell rings below) Too late—it's your father! (Glances off D. C.) No—it's someone else. (Suddenly) Who do you suppose?

DOROTHY. I can't imagine!

ARTHUR (down to her). Of all persons—a parson.

DOROTHY. A parson?

ENTER ORMSBY D. C.

ARTHUR (with a sweeping bow). Welcome to our city. Ormsby. A gentleman called at my residence a short while ago, paid in advance and stated that a young couple desired to be married.

ARTHUR (quickly). We do.

DOROTHY (aside to ARTHUR). But Arthur—

ARTHUR (nudges her. Aside). Don't say a word. Chilton's even paid the marriage fee.

DOROTHY (puzzled). I don't understand!

ORMSBY. I am called out of the city, so that if you can conveniently—

ARTHUR (quickly). We won't keep you waiting a minute. (To D. L. 3, calling off) Harry, oh. Harry!

ENTER HARRY D. L. 3.

ARTHUR. Dorothy and I are going to be married and we want you to stand up for us. Will you do it?

HARRY. You dare ask that after getting me into such hot

water?

ARTHUR. It'll soon cool off. (Nudging him in side) Go on—be a good fellow. Remember I did as much for you one time.

HARRY (sadly). And for the last time. It's a go. But only on condition you square me with my mother-in-law.

ARTHUR. It's a bargain. (To Ormsby) Parson, lead the way. (Begins humming strains of the wedding march. Ormsby pompously off L., followed by Harry, then Arthur offering his arm to Dorothy and continuing to hum the wedding march, EXITS D. L. with her.)

CHILTON (breathlessly on from c.). Thank goodness, they let the Colonel go after he'd shown his papers. Now for Dorothy! (At d. R. 1, calling aloud) Dorothy! Dorothy!

(Then after pause) She must be in the front room.

[EXIT D. R. 1.

Colonel (limps slowly on D. C., from R. his coat torn, his hair disheveled and his eyes blackened). Oh, what a day this has been! I haven't seen so much excitement since my service in India.

CHILTON (on excitedly from D. R. 1). Dorothy's not in her

room.

Colonel (surprised). Eh? What? Are you sure? The maid told me the parson had arrived. Perhaps she learned of my predicament and has hurried to the police station. Quick! after her—and bring her back!

CHILTON. I'll not delay! [EXIT c. D. going R. COLONEL. Meanwhile I'll pack our grips. Chilton is right. America is too swift a place for us. At the rate we've been going—I shouldn't last a week. We'll return on to-morrow's boat. A month at Monte Carlo will, I hope, restore my shattered nerves. [EXIT D. R. 1.

ENTER MOLLIE D. C., with telegram. Calling aloud.

Mollie. Oh. Mr. Maitland—Mr. Maitland!

ENTER ARTHUR quickly D. L. 1.

ARTHUR. What is it? One could hear you all over the house.

Mollie (handing him telegram). For you, sir.

Arthur. A telegram? For me? You interrupted me just as the parson was about to— (Has opened telegram. Gives a start) Great Scott! My book accepted! (Joyfully kisses Mollie) Mollie, you're good luck!

Mollie (confusedly). Oh, lor', sir, what would Mike

O'Flynn say!

ARTHUR (excitedly). Accepted! By Jove, I don't need uncle's help now. (At D. L. 1. Aloud) Dorothy! Dorothy! [EXIT quickly D. L. 1. Listen to this!

ENTER BAUER breathlessly D. C.

BAUER. I missed my man; but I git him yet. Der clue don't lie. I am nearer und nearer to der reward. (Glances off c.) S-h. Someone is coming. (Behind screen.)

ENTER MRS. SHEFFIELD with baby.

Mrs. Sheffield. Milly! Milly! where are you?

ENTER COLONEL D. R. 1.

COLONEL. Ah, Madam! I'll trouble you for that child. (Places grips, etc., on floor.)

Mrs. Sheffield (drawing away). Are you back again? When did you get out? (Moves over and around table.)

COLONEL. Because the police believed my story. I am Colonel Thaddeus Crane, Madam, Arthur's uncle—but I am through with him forever. I am leaving this house at once!

MRS. SHEFFIELD. Thank goodness!

COLONEL. But taking the child with me.

Mrs. Sheffield (aside). He's got a different hallucination this time.

Colonel (attempts to seize baby). So, Madam, you'd better give her up to me.

Mrs. Sheffield (moving to L.). Help! Help!

Colonel (angrily). Come, Madam—come! Mrs. Sheffield (wildly). Help! Help!

ENTER ARTHUR suddenly D. L. 1.

ARTHUR. Uncle, what does this mean?

Colonel. That I demand the custody of your child!

Mrs. Sheffield. His child?

COLONEL. From what I've seen of this household it is not the proper environment for the little innocent. Mrs. Sheffield. Is that so? Well then why didn't you

leave long ago?

ARTHUR (to COLONEL). Better be careful, uncle.

Mrs. Sheffield (looking at Arthur). Uncle, uncle? Is he really your uncle?

ARTHUR. He is, madam.

Colonel. And that baby is-

Mrs. Sheffield. None of your business.

Colonel (staggered. To Arthur). Isn't this baby your-

ARTHUR (interrupting). No sir, it isn't!
Colonel (furious). Ah, then the story of your marriage? ARTHUR. Was true.

ENTER CHILTON wildly D. C.

CHILTON. She wasn't there, Colonel—not there. Colonel. This is a nice trick.

ENTER DOROTHY D. L. 1, followed by Ormsby, Harry, and MILLY.

Colonel (espying her). Ah, Dorothy—there you are. (To Ormsby) Quick, Parson, I want you to marry my daughter to-

DOROTHY (nervously). Please dad—I am already married. Colonel (staggered). Married? To whom?

ARTHUR. To me, sir.
Colonel. To you! Then your other wife?

HARRY (placing arm about MILLY). Was never his wife at all!

Colonel. Deception on every side. (To Chilton) My poor boy. (Then to DOROTHY) Well, Dorothy, you have gone against my wishes, married a disreputable fellow when I had chosen for you—

Bauer (has come from behind screen and down to Chilton and tapped him on shoulder). A scoundrel und a dief!

COLONEL (starts). What—you again? BAUER. Yes, me. Und I have caught Jim Sweeney at

last! (Displays police badge.)

Colonel (starting). A detective, eh? (Then changing tone) But, my dear fellow, this is my secretary. Chauncey Chilton.

BAUER. Dot's only one of his names! (Holding CHILTON'S left wrist to view) See, der tattooed cross?

ALL. The tattooed cross!

BAUER. Dot proves everyding. I been on his track fer many years, und now der reward is mine.

ARTHUR (to DOROTHY). And I had it right in my hands,

all the time.

CHILTON (looking down). I guess the jig's up. I played

my game and lost.

Colonel (surprised). Why, you don't mean to say— CHILTON (nodding slowly in affirmative). He's got me right, Colonel. I knew this American trip would prove my undoing.

BAUER (taking handcuffs from pocket). Come along,

sonny.

CHILTON (at p. c.). So long, Colonel—good-bye every-

body.

BAUER (to others). Und I tried so hard to give somebody half of der reward. It only goes to show, you can never judge a man by his face. (To CHILTON, forcing off c.) Come on-no monkey bizness now. On your way!

[EXIT c. d. going R. HARRY (who has been looking at newspaper clipping). If

only I'd kept on comparing faces!

DOROTHY (to COLONEL, who has fallen on chair R. of table). You're not angry, dad.

Colonel (rising, sheepishly). Dorothy, I realize that I'm

an old fool.

ARTHUR (handing Colonel telegram). Take a look at this, Colonel!

Colonel (glances at telegram). By Jove, you do know something after all. Well I misjudged you all along. (Referring to Dorothy) Take her my boy—take her.

ARTHUR (his arm about DOROTHY). You're just a trifle

late, Colonel,-I've already got her.

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